IN THE CLAIMS:

Please amend Claims 41, 48, and 56 as follows:

1. - 40. (Cancelled)

41. (Currently Amended) An apparatus for processing image data to prevent the output of copy-prohibited image data, said apparatus comprising:

means for transferring image data defining an image in packets such that each packet contains image data for a tile of the image, wherein the image is made up of a plurality of tiles in the length and width directions;

determination means for testing the image data defining the image to determine whether the image data has characteristics of a copy-prohibited image;

dividing means for dividing the image into a plurality of blocks based upon a size of a characteristic portion of a copy-prohibited image for testing by said determination means, such that each block includes image data for an integer number of tiles; and

control means for generating a control signal to prevent the output of image data for faithfully reproducing the image, in response to detection of image data having characteristics of a copy-prohibited image by said determination means,

wherein said determination means is arranged to test the blocks generated by said dividing means to determine whether a block has characteristics of a copy-prohibited image.

42. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to Claim 41, wherein said apparatus further comprises image processing means responsive to the control signal to execute predetermined processing of the image data determined by said determination means to have characteristics of a copy-prohibited image, wherein said control means is operable to generate the control signal to control said image processing means.

43. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to Claim 42, wherein said image processing means is responsive to the control signal to change the density or brightness of the image data.

44. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to Claim 42, wherein said image processing means is responsive to the control signal to erase the image data.

45. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to Claim 41, wherein said determination means is operable to test the image data of a block to determine whether the image data has characteristics of a copy-prohibited image by testing the image data to determine whether it contains a digital watermark.

46. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to Claim 41, wherein said apparatus further comprises thinning means for thinning the image data defining the image to generate a low-resolution image, and said dividing means is arranged to divide the low-resolution image to generate the plurality of blocks.

47. (Previously Presented) An apparatus according to Claim 46, wherein said determination means comprises means to test the blocks of low-resolution data to detect the position of image data potentially having characteristics of a copy-prohibited image; extract at least one block of original-resolution image data on the basis of the detected position, and test the extracted at least one block of original-resolution image data to determine whether the at least one block has characteristics of a copy-prohibited image.

48. (Currently Amended) A method of processing image data to prevent the output of copy-prohibited image data, said method comprising:

a step of transferring image data defining an image in packets such that each packet contains image data for a tile of the image, the image being made up of a plurality of tiles in the length and width directions;

a determining step of testing the image data defining the image to determine whether the image data has characteristics of a copy-prohibited image;

a dividing step of dividing the image into a plurality of blocks based upon a size of a characteristic portion of a copy-prohibited image for testing in said determining step, such that each block includes image data for an integer number of tiles; and

a control step of generating a control signal to prevent the output of image data for faithfully reproducing the image in response to the detection of image data having characteristics of a copy-prohibited image,

wherein said determining step tests the blocks generated in said dividing step to determine whether a block has characteristics of a copy-prohibited image.

49. (Previously Presented) A method according to claim 48, wherein said method further comprises a step of executing predetermined image processing of the image data determined in said determining step to have characteristics of a copy-prohibited image in response to the control signal, wherein said control step comprises generating a control signal to control the image processing.

50. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 49, wherein the image processing performed in response to the control signal changes the density or brightness of the image data.

51. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 49, wherein the image processing performed in response to the control signal erases the image data.

52. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 48, wherein said determining step comprises testing the image data of a block to determine whether the image data has characteristics of a copy-prohibited image by testing the image data to determine whether it contains a digital watermark.

53. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 48, wherein said method further comprises a step of thinning the image data defining the image to generate a low-resolution image, and wherein said dividing step comprises dividing the low-resolution image to generate to plurality of blocks.

54. (Previously Presented) A method according to Claim 53, wherein said determining step comprises testing the blocks of low-resolution image data to detect a position of image data potentially having characteristics of a copy-prohibited image, extracting at least one block of original-resolution image data on the basis of the detected position, and testing the at least one extracted block of original-resolution image data to determine whether the at least one block has characteristics of a copy-prohibited image.

55. (Previously Presented) A storage medium storing computer-readable program instructions to program a programmable processing apparatus to perform a method comprising the steps of Claim 48.

56. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ <u>Program instructions embodied in a computer-readable medium comprising instructions to</u> ~~signal carrying computer-readable program instructions to~~ program a programmable processing apparatus to perform a method comprising the steps of Claim 48.